

female from Bishop Creek, Inyo County, California, 8500', under rocks by creek, Derham Giuliani collector.

Some specimens have the legs entirely rufo-testaceous. This species is most similar to *austinianus* but can be distinguished easily by the emarginate sixth sternite of the male and by the sides of the pronotum not being sinuate before the hind angles as in that species.

#### LITERATURE CITED

- HATCH, M. H. 1957. Beetles of the Pacific Northwest. Part II. Staphyliniformia. Univ. Washington Publ. Biol. 16:i-x, 1-384; 37 plates.
- LE CONTE, J. L. 1874. [descriptions of new species] *In*, E. P. Austin: Catalogue of the Coleoptera of Mt. Washington, N. H. Proc. Boston Soc. Nat. Hist. 16:265-276.
- MOORE, I. 1966. Notes on the Nearctic Anthophagini with a key to the genera (Coleoptera: Staphylinidae). *Coleopt. Bull.* 20:47-56; 22 figs.

#### BOOK REVIEW

*An island called California, an ecological introduction to its natural communities* by Elna Bakker with photographs by Philip Hyde. 1971. University of California Press, 2223 Fulton Street, Berkeley, Cal. 94720. 357p., 24 line fig., numerous photos. Cloth, \$10.00

This is a beautifully produced book with a broad coverage of natural history subjects. The diversity in California ecology is equalled in few areas of the U.S. Such a book will do much to orient the non-Californian as well as suggest new ideas and approaches for field work. Coleopterists who contemplate collecting trips to this State will find their efforts better rewarded by advanced reading of this book.—(R. E. Woodruff)

### A NOTE ON *PARACOTALPA DESERTA* SAYLOR (COLEOPTERA: SCARABAEIDAE: RUTELINAE)

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#### ABSTRACT

*Paracotalpa deserta* Saylor is a rare species found in the Colorado Desert region of California and Baja California, Mexico. Specimens were collected in an area of *Larrea* and *Franseria*, and many were impaled on spines of the latter, possibly by shrikes. Known distributional data is summarized.

*Paracotalpa deserta* Saylor (1940:195) is a rarely collected species which has, as indicated by the recent date of description, escaped detec-

tion for many years. Recently, through Dr. R. Flock, El Centro, California, I learned details of the habits and occurrence of this beetle.

In February 1971 a series of 30 individuals were brought to me for determination. Some of the specimens had been recently collected. In company with R. McPeak and A. Gilbert, San Diego, California, Dr. Flock and I returned to the site of collection, and searched for additional examples. The area, located approximately 20 miles west of Calexico, Imperial Co., is in the Colorado Desert region of the Sonoran Desert. Scattered, stunted creosote (*Larrea*) and burr sage (*Franseria*) were the only plants in abundance. The ground was hard packed desert pavement, interspersed with small sandy patches, and laced with sandy-bottomed washes. Efforts to locate the insects during the mid-day were unsuccessful. During the late afternoon, specimens were found at the bases of both *Larrea* and *Franseria*, although those examples collected alive were too few to make any definite host associations. On previous occasions, most specimens were reported by Dr. Flock to be flying in the late afternoon. On my visit to the area, strong winds were blowing, which may have been the reason none were observed in flight.

Most of the approximately 30 additional specimens collected were taken from the apical spines of *Franseria*, where they had been impaled, probably by birds (shrikes?). Most specimens were in good condition, and many were still soft, indicating recent death. Subsequent collecting at the same site has resulted in collection of additional specimens impaled in the same fashion.

The black color of this species, unusual in a diurnal desert scarab, may be of advantage in heat gain from radiant sunlight, since the period of activity is during the winter months, when lowest temperatures in these areas may reach freezing.

Specimens have been examined with the following data: CALIFORNIA: *Imperial Co.*: Coyote Wells, 25-II-1959; El Centro, 15-II-1958; Ocotillo, 26-III-1970, 7-II-1971; Seeley, 9-II-1971; Sunrise Butte (20 mi. W. Calexico), 28-II-1969. *San Diego Co.*: S. End Anza-Borrego, 25-III-1969. MEXICO: *Baja California Norte*: Laguna Salada.

ADDENDUM: On February 11, 1972, at the Sunrise Butte locale, over 100 additional individuals were collected, and 250 additional specimens were taken during the following few days. Beetles emerged in the early afternoon and began a period of active flight lasting for 2 or 3 hours. After the initial flight period, specimens were often found on fleshy annuals scattered throughout the area.

A few females were caged alive in the open and were located by males flying in a zig-zag fashion, low to the ground. This suggests a pheromone is involved. Later in the afternoon, clusters of up to a dozen individuals were located (usually mating pairs with numerous other individuals crawling over them). These clusters were usually associated with the above mentioned annuals.

#### LITERATURE CITED

- SAYLOR, L. W. 1940. Synoptic revision of the beetle genera *Cotalpa* and *Paracotalpa* of the United States, with description of a new subgenus. *Proc. Ent. Soc. Washington* 42(9):190-200.